

The Director
Central Intelligence Agency

Executive Registry

78-705114



Washington, D.C. 20505

20 December 1978

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SHEPHERD

OLC #78-36415/A

Dear Mr. Levin,

Attached for your information is
a copy of my response to a letter from

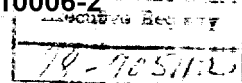
Michigan to Dr. Brzezinski concerning
CIA analysis of the situation in Iran.

noted that he was forward-
ing a copy of his inquiry to you.

I look forward to discussing this
and other matters with you.


STANFIELD TURNER

Central Intelligence Agency

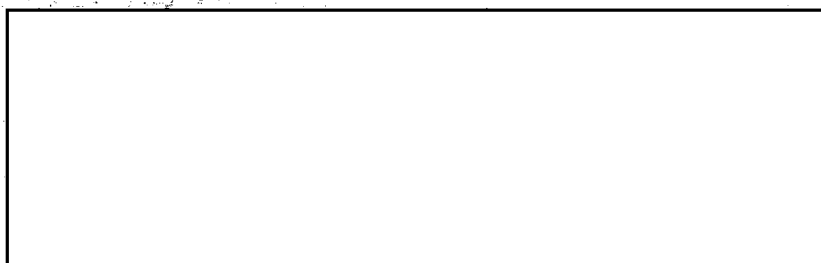


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Dr. Brzezinski has asked that I respond to your questions concerning the CIA's analysis of the situation in Iran.

CIA did not in fact provide a National Intelligence Estimate on Iran to the White House as has been suggested in the press. In mid-summer analysts from several government agencies did produce a draft of a possible Estimate, but that draft was judged by myself and other senior officers of CIA as needing more work. By mid-August it was clear that events were moving too swiftly to make it worthwhile to produce a long-term Estimate such as this was. Accordingly in September the effort was terminated.

Thank you for calling the articles from Le Monde Diplomatique to our attention. The Agency does subscribe to this publication, and has a component that reviews this and numerous other foreign language publications. Selected articles are translated and distributed to the appropriate analysts who work on the various regions of the world. This particular series, however, was not brought to the attention of the analysts who cover the Iranian political and economic situation, in part because of the clear bias of the authors.

The article by Mr. Brun is well written and effectively presents his views on the religious opposition and on some aspects of the dislocation caused by land reform. Our analysts take major exception to two of Mr. Brun's points: that the

Shah and President Carter struck a deal allowing the Shah to end his liberalization program and that the Iranian military is a part of "the North American military industrial complex," and that "Iran is too closely integrated into the American strategic network to take positions different from those of their protectors across the Atlantic." Mr. Farouhy's rendition of the recent history of Iran was not judged useful because it is so badly skewed by his obvious bias.

Our analysts and members of the US academic community have written on the elements of discontent and on the opposition to the current government. Most observers of the Iran scene, including those in the Intelligence Community, did not at first believe that these problems would seriously threaten the Shah's government in the near term. We note that Mr. Brun in his article does not predict such a collapse.

The allegations in the press that the CIA relied on SAVAK for its information on Iran are untrue. Analysis of the situation in Iran is based on information from a wide variety of sources, including [redacted] open source material such as press accounts and academic dissertations. You are entirely correct that it would be unwise to depend on a local intelligence service for our information on the situation in that country.

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Since I became Director of Central Intelligence I have devoted substantial attention to efforts to improve the Intelligence Community's support to policy makers. As a part of this effort I have been attempting to improve the quality of our analysis, and therefore am especially grateful for your interest in this subject and in your recommendations.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

cc: The Honorable Zbigniew Brzezinski
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

The Honorable Carl Levin
United States Senate